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citation is made only to volume-chapter, without page or line, real hardships is inflicted upon the user of the book : for example, the excerpt on p. 33, *Chron.* an. 1016, must be sought through five pages in a single MS. ; or that on p. 140 to the *Cartularium Saxonicum*, No. 1130, which covers four pages.

Finally, cross-reference to parallel phenomena would add much to the usability of the book. To indicate just a few instances, the following figures are briefly added : between pp. 7 and 28 ; 20 and 160 ; 36 and 140 ; 37 and 141 ; 40 and 135 ; 54 and 67.

H. G. SHEARIN.

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*Geschichte der isländischen Dichtung der Neuzeit* (1800–1900),  
von M. phil. Carl Küchler. Leipzig, Hermann Haacke, 1902.  
Heft I. Novellistik. vi+85 pp. Heft II. Dramatik.  
vi+79 pp. 8°.

The first part of Küchler's work appeared in 1896 although the date upon the title-page was changed at the appearance of Part II. It is the author's intention to issue still another part on the *Lyrik*. Purely objective reasons have impelled him to treat these three branches of literary activity in the inverse order of their development and importance in the history of Modern Icelandic literature. Only in the field covered by the first division of his work, has Küchler been able to profit somewhat by the labor of predecessors. He has therefore felt obliged, for the sake of completeness, to devote space in Parts I and II to outlines of a number of productions of little or no permanent literary value. Another cogent reason for this procedure is that most of the originals are extremely difficult of access, while many others exist only in manuscript and might soon be entirely lost. Küchler has spared no pains in obtaining first hand knowledge of his material, depending only in extreme cases upon copies or excerpts furnished by friends. His criticisms, whether favorable or unfavorable, are, at any rate, impartial. Each part is provided with an index to authors, titles, and subjects.

Several reviews of Part I appeared at the time of its publication. A. Heusler in particular furnished very fair estimates of it in *Anz.f.d.A.* 23. 386–387, and Herrig's *Archiv* 97. 392–393. Küchler

traces the development of the modern novel and short story from their beginnings in the period of the general awakening in Iceland (about 1830). The poet, Jónas Hallgrímsson, has the honor of being "the father and founder" of Icelandic *Novellistik*, chiefly through his singularly beautiful tale *Grasaferð* (1847). Jón Thóroddsen, best known by his novel *Piltur og stúlka*, and Gestur Pálsson, undeniably the most brilliant novelist Iceland has produced, also deserve wider recognition than is possible through the German and Danish translations of their principal stories. The historical novel has found its most capable treatment in the hands of the authoress, Torfhildur Þorsteinsdóttir Holm. Among the writers of lesser importance Küchler reckons five members of the Icelandic settlements in Canada, where nearly a fifth of the reading public of this nationality now resides.

In the drama also there were no native productions in Iceland until after the opening of the nineteenth century. Continuous development in this field came still later, and hence was nearly contemporaneous with the beginnings of the modern novel. The most interesting of the several early attempts at dramatic writing were composed by Geir Vídalín and by Sigurður Pétursson for the boys of the Latin School in Reykjavík. The real creator of the Icelandic drama, however, is the gifted poet, Rev. Matthías Jochumsson, whose first play, *Útilegumennirnir*, was written in 1861 while the author was still a student at the Latin School. This encouraged the production of a large number of pieces by other students, for the greater part comedies influenced by those of Holberg or Shakespeare. From the impulse given by the school-comedies in Reykjavík, play-writing began to receive very general attention from other classes of people throughout the island. During the years that followed, even peasants, tradesmen, and mechanics brought out works which gave evidence of considerable genius in spite of faulty technique. To this general class, Küchler adds the half-score of dramatic efforts produced on American soil by the Icelandic immigrants in Canada, (page 40). But dramas of real worth were hardly produced until practically the end of the century, and to these the author gives a very full and appreciative treatment. Eggert Ólafsson Briem's *Gizurr Þorvaldsson*, (published 1895-1899), written under the influence of Ibsen, is too extensive and unwieldy for the stage, but as an historical drama he concedes it more than ordinary value. The two writers, however, who have in

their latest works brought the Icelandic drama to the highest degree of excellence yet reached and have made it worthy of the attention of a larger public, are Matthías Jochumsson and Indriði Einarsson. The former, in his historical tragedy (*Harmsöguleikur*), *Jón Arason*, deals with an episode in the ecclesiastical history of Iceland in the middle of the sixteenth century. This work was published in Ísafjörður in 1900, and later translated into Danish by its author. *Sverð og bagall*, by Indriði Einarsson, published in 1899 in Reykjavík, is likewise an historical drama. The material is from a chapter out of the *Sturlunga saga*. Küchler has made a German translation of the play with the title *Schwert und Krummstab*, Berlin, 1900. There is also a Danish version by Henrik Ussing, *Sverd og Krumstav*, Copenhagen, 1901.

The author also presents an interesting sketch of the development of the theater in Iceland, which by reason of the extremely unfavorable conditions existing in the island, is not yet out of the hands of amateurs.

Translations of foreign plays, mainly Danish comedies and French and English farces, but also Shakespeare's best works, have been presented and published in Iceland.

The more important foreign influences upon the native drama noted by the author are primarily those of the Danish writers of comedy, then Shakespeare and Ibsen.

Heusler's criticism of Part I, that Küchler apparently assumed too great a familiarity on the part of his readers with the works discussed, and hence wrote "mehr von den Sachen als über die Sachen," would not apply to the *Dramatik*. The author certainly deserves much credit for his long and tedious labor in an entirely new and interesting field.

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